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Traditional medicinal knowledge about *Daphnis nerii* L. (*Deilephila nerii* L.) [Lepidoptera: Sphingidae] feeding on Sarp Gandha (*Rauvolfia serpentina*) in Chhattisgarh, India. Updated Version.

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Traditional medicinal knowledge about *Daphnis nerii* L. (*Deilephila nerii* L.) [Lepidoptera: Sphingidae] feeding on Sarp Gandha (*Rauvolfia serpentina*) in Chhattisgarh, India. Updated Version.

Pankaj Oudhia

Introduction

Entomophagy and Entomotherapy are well known in Asia since generations. Unfortunately not much work has been done to document valuable Traditional Medicinal Knowledge about Insects. Pankaj Oudhia is documenting this knowledge since year 1990. The present note “Traditional medicinal knowledge about *Daphnis nerii* L. (*Deilephila nerii* L.) [Lepidoptera: Sphingidae] feeding on Sarpagandha (*Rauvolfia serpentina*) in Chhattisgarh, India.” is updated version of his previously published online research document available through pankajoudhia.com.

Keywords: Entomophagy; Entomotherapy; Medicinal Insects; Ayurveda; Chhattisgarh;

According to the reference literatures, Sarpagandha (*Rauvolfia serpentina*) is a well known herb of medicinal importance in India. The drug Rauvolfia consists of air-dried roots. Rauvolfia preparations are used as anti-hypersensitives and as sedatives. It is also employed for relief of various central nervous system disorders associated with psychosis, schizophrenia, insanity, insomnia and epilepsy. The extracts of roots are valued for treatment of intestinal disorders. Mixed with other plant extracts, they are used in treatment of Cholera, colic and fever. The dense forests of Chhattisgarh are rich in natural population of Sarpagandha. Sarpagandha is also under cultivation as commercial medicinal crop. Many insects attack on its wild population. *Deilephila* is one of these insects. The traditional healers of Sarpagandha rich regions of Chhattisgarh use the full fed caterpillars of this hawk moth as medicine. Although the caterpillars are common in Sarpagandha fields also but the caterpillars collected from wild population are only used as medicine. Through the Ethno-entomological surveys conducted in these regions, I have collected valuable information on traditional medicinal uses of this insect. The traditional healers collect the full fed caterpillars and after drying convert it into powder. Many healers use the caterpillars after purification. The caterpillars are dipped in herbal solution after collection, upto entire night. Next morning, after drying it is used as medicine. As traditional secret they do not disclose the contents of herbal solution but many healers informed that Bach (*Acrorus calamus*) and Neem play important roles in the herbal solution. The dried caterpillars in powder form are used internally in combination with medicinal herbs in treatment of mental depression. Although the caterpillar powder is added in very small amount but without this powder, the combination is considered incomplete. The traditional healers of Southern Chhattisgarh add the freshly collected caterpillars in Til (Sesame seed) oil and kept the solution in sunlight for a month. After this duration, the special oil is filtered and used as medicine. This oil is considered as a boon for the patients suffering from Mirgi (Epilepsy). During attack, the oil is massaged on all over the body. In normal days, the oil is massaged in same manner in order to delay the further attack. According to the traditional healers of Narharpur region, the caterpillar powder can be used in treatment of insomnia, internally but as other promising alternatives are available, it is used less commonly. From documentation point of view it is an important information. The traditional healers of Chhattisgarh are not aware of its other traditional medicinal uses.

In reference literatures, *Deilephila nerii* is not reported as medicinal insect. These traditional medicinal uses are coming for the first time among the world community through the present research article.

New comments added on May, 2014

Through recent surveys I have collected information about over 2000 Formulations in which Deilephila is added as important ingredient. These Formulations are used in treatment of diseases of nervous system. In Traditional Santhi Rice based Formulations Deilephila is added as denary ingredient. These Formulations are used in treatment of old cases of Epilepsy. In Phyllanthus based Formulations it is added as secondary ingredient. These Formulations are used in treatment of sleep disorders. In Anogeissus based Formulations of Odisha it is added as tertiary ingredient. These Formulations are used in new cases of Epilepsy. In Terminalia arjuna based Formulations it is added as quinary ingredient. In Lannea based Formulations of Bastar it is added as quaternary ingredient. These Formulations are used in treatment of Insomnia. In Gardenia based Formulations of Kanker it is added as quinary ingredient. These Formulations are used both internally as well as externally in treatment of sleep disorders. In Litsea based Formulations used for Mental Depression it is added as octonary ingredient. These Formulations are popular among the senior Traditional Healers. In Pterocarpus based Formulations for Epilepsy it is added as senary ingredient. Deilephila caterpillars are purified before adding in these Formulations. Over 10 types of wild herbs are used to purify it. In Gymnema and Tinospora based Formulations it is added as septenary ingredient. These Formulations are used by the Traditional Healers of Chhattisgarh and Odisha. In Celastrus based Formulations for Mental Depression Deilephila is added as nonary ingredient. For complete Formulations and information on Dosage please visit pankajoudhia.com

Thank you very much for reading the article.

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